

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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J. TYLER McCAULEY AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

September 15, 2006

TO:

Mayor Michael D. Antonovich Supervisor Gloria Molina Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM:

J. Tyler McCauley Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT:

GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT - TRINITY

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES: TRINITY-WHITEWATER GROUP

HOME

We have completed a review of Trinity-Whitewater Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Trinity Children and Family Services, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Trinity-Whitewater Group Home is a 120-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 12-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Trinity-Whitewater Group Home was providing services for 63 Los Angeles County Probation children, nine Alameda County children, six San Diego County children, three Kern County children, three Sacramento County children, three San Francisco County children, one San Luis Obispo County child, and one Sonoma County child.

Trinity-Whitewater Group Home is located in Riverside County.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program

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Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address the following deficient areas:

Trinity-Whitewater Group Home needs to replace two bathroom exhaust fans; include placement workers as part of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans; provide all children with sufficient quantities of clothing; and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:dl http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Jeff Bierlein, Facility Director, Trinity-Whitewater Group Home
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

Trinity Children and Family Services
Trinity-Whitewater Group Home
55860 Haugen-Lehmenn Way
Whitewater, California 92282
Phone: (760) 325-1387

License Number: 330900909 Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Trinity-Whitewater Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The grounds are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, two bathroom exhaust fans are not working.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

1. Trinity Children and Family Services management repair or replace the broken bathroom exhaust fans.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Seven

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive, include long and short-term goals, and input from the child. However, the placement workers are not included as part of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

2. Trinity Children and Family Services management include placement workers as part of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Seven

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Seven

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment -Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Seven

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Seven

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Clothing provided to children is of good quality. Three children have sufficient quantities of clothing; however, four children do not. One child is in need of pants; another child needs shirts, shoes, pajamas, undergarments, sweaters, and a bathrobe; another child needs undershirts, and a sweater; and another child needs shoes, a sweater, and a bathrobe.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books. However, one child reports that he has not been offered a photo album/life book.

Recommendations

- 3. Trinity Children and Family Services management:
 - a. Provide all children with sufficient quantities of clothing.
 - b. Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

TRINITY WHITEWATER

Corrective Action Plan for 2006 L.A. County Audit of Trinity-Whitewater

Date Faxed: 04/11/06

The L.A. County Auditor identified the following.

Recommendations

1. Facility and Environment

1. Trinity management repair or replace the exhaust fans. The exhaust fans were purchased on 03/28/06 (a copy of this order form included). On 03/31/06, maintenance staff, Brian Dunaway installed the fan in room 122 and Martin Caliano installed the fan in room 214. Maintenance staff (Caliano and Dunaway) will be responsible for the continued operation of these fans.

II. Program Services

2. Trinity management include placement workers as part of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSP's. Whitewater will utilize an "Invitation to Treatment Planning" document (a blank form included). This will be faxed to the resident's Probation Officer, by the resident's respective unit supervisor. This invitation, the response and the fax confirmation will be kept in the resident's main file.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

- 3. Trinity management:
- A. Provide all children with sufficient quantities of clothing, as indicated. The residents' identified received the items indicated (copies of the clothing issue with the resident's signature included) on 03/22/06, these items were issued by staff Richard Avalos. All residents, upon intake, are provided the clothing allotment as outlined in the contract.
- B. Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books. The resident identified as not receiving a life book was issued this album by Recreation Coordinator, Danny Gantt (a copy of the resident's signature for receiving the book included). Our Recreation Department issues the book to our residents', provides suggestions for the use of the album and assistance, such as providing photos for inclusion.

TRINITY WHITEWATER 55860 Haugen-Lehmann Way Whitewater, California 92282

> T.(760) 325-1387 F.(760) 325 7627

www.trinitywhitewater.org

Empowering Children and families for Over Forty Years
Trinity Residential Services is a division of trinity Youth Services

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TRINITY WHITEWATER

If any further clarification is necessary, please feel free to contact me at (760) 325-1387 or (951) 258-6182 (cell).

Jeff Bierlein

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